

OPERATING BUDGET MEETING

OF THE

PUBLIC WORKS and TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The Public Works and Transportation Operating Budget Meeting was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, Smithtown, New York, on Wednesday, October 21, 2008 at 9:30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Legislator Brian Beedenbender - Chairman
Legislator Steve Stern - Vice-Chairman
Legislator Wayne Horsley
Legislator John Kennedy

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

George Nolan - Counsel to the Legislature
Gil Anderson- Commissioner of Public Works
Tom Laguardi - Chief Deputy Commissioner - Public Works
Lou Calderone - Deputy Commissioner - Public Works
Ben Wright - Sanitation Department - DPW
Bob Shinnick - Transportation Division - DPW
Bill Hillman - Chief Engineer- DPW
Barbara LoMoriello - Deputy Clerk - SC Legislature
Ben Zwirn - Deputy County Executive
Allen Kovesdy - County Executive's Budget Office
Rosalind Gazes - Budget Review Office
Robert Doering - Budget Review Office
George Roach - Legal Aid Society/Senior Citizen Division
Dan Farrell - AME Treasurer

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Donna Catalano - Court Stenographer

MINUTES TRANSCRIBED BY:

Kim Castiglione - Legislative Secretary

(THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 9:42 A.M.)

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

If everyone could rise for the Pledge led by Legislator Kennedy.

SALUTATION

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Thank you. All right. I have one card, or two cards, it looks like there's another one coming. The first card I have is George Roach from the Legal Aid Society. Hi, George.

MR. ROACH:

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, members of committee. I will be brief. Brevity is not a character defect, okay? Those who don't know what I do, I'm the Senior Citizens Division attorney at the Legal Aid Society and I've been there for the past 30 years. I'm here this morning because it's my belief this committee will be overseeing the report from the Space Management Committee. Space Management Committee apparently will be recommending a move of our program from its present location in Bay Shore to the fourth floor of the Central Islip Court Complex, the Cohalan Court Complex.

As you know, the senior citizens that we represent, people 60 and over, they're frailer, they're older, they have canes, walkers, wheelchairs. The move to the fourth floor at Central Islip is going to be quite devastating on these people in that it is essentially denying them access. I know the building is accessible, it passes muster with the Americans With Disabilities Act, but if you've been to the courthouse in Central Islip you know there is a tremendous walk through the parking lot, it's a crowded parking lot.

The real problem is going to be standing on line with the metal detectors. As attorneys, we are issued an Office of Court Administration access pass so we don't have to stand on line with the metal detectors, but these people with their canes and their wheelchairs and walkers essentially are going to stand on line. And on any given day, especially in the morning, it can be upwards of an hour to get through that metal detector and then find our way up to the fourth floor of the Cohalan Court Complex.

The County Executive in his budget says this is going to save approximately \$100,000. It's in the budget, the 2009 budget, and in lieu of saving that kind of money I see you -- it sort of disaffects and denies access to a whole portion of our population of seniors that are out there, and they are in excess of about 250,000 people 60 and over residing here in Suffolk County. They are living longer, and as I said, I see them older, frailer. And especially in this economic climate, our office is presently defending about two dozen foreclosure actions with senior citizens who are -- have refinanced the house to point where it's gone. And, as you know, as Legislators, that's why our program exists. You have all referred senior clients to us who have these legal problems. That's why the program exists.

I would ask you to really take these -- the difficulties seniors will have in accessing the program over at Central Islip if it moves from Bay Shore. If there is anything you can do to keep in Bay Shore, I would certainly appreciate that consideration. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Thank you. Does anybody have any questions? John?

LEG. KENNEDY:

George, when you look at the amount of square feet that you need for your operation, how many

folks are you talking about? There's yourself and Jim; maybe two attorneys, three attorneys?

MR. ROACH:

At our present location we have six people are the Senior Citizen Division of the Legal Aid Society. Three attorneys, a receptionist, and two paralegals, but we are also located and we reside with the Administrative Offices of the Legal Aid Society. So all told we have 11 people that are in that present -- and by the way, that's a first floor location where people can immediately park outside the office, come right in, they are seen right away with their legal problem. They don't have a problem accessing the program, that's for sure, which I feel they will have if it goes over to CI.

LEG. KENNEDY:

And is there any overlap between the admin folks and yourself? I mean, do they pitch in on occasion if you are inundated with your --

MR. ROACH:

Absolutely. As you know, a fixed number of people, the secretaries and the administration, they pick up the phones when certain people are out to lunch. We all try to cover for one another, so there is that natural overlap.

LEG. KENNEDY:

There's a lot of sense, then, in being co-located.

MR. ROACH:

Right.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. All right. That's it, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Legislator Stern.

LEG. STERN:

And, George, it's not just the length of the line, but many times before they open the doors that line is outside.

MR. ROACH:

Correct. The line goes outside the building. And not only that, in the wintertime with the weather as it is, it's tough enough for a fully able bodied person, young, less than 60 years of age, to access that building. It's pretty tough.

LEG. STERN:

And how many meetings or consultations can go on in your office at any one time?

MR. ROACH:

At any one time we probably average I'd say about 50 people a month. They are entitled to walk into this program, although we do recommend you call and get an appointment so you are not sitting in the waiting room. The problem is they need to bring back their paperwork. This is civil legal services. A lot of times they come in, we have a consultation, we need to see documentation. We ask them to go back and get their mortgage papers. Maybe they don't have them, they come in with partial papers. So sometimes clients require two, three, four, half a dozen visits to the office to be able to put that case together for them.

LEG. STERN:

So on any given day can you even approximate how many cars or parking spaces would be required just for your program to offer at any one time?

MR. ROACH:

Well, as far as the parking goes, there is public parking off of Main Street right behind our building. Sidney Siben's office is right there, so we have plenty of public parking and there are two handicapped spaces that are available right outside the door. And we have designated Legal Aid parking which clients can also use.

You travel over to the courthouse in Central Islip, the handicapped parking out in front of the building is all taken up by the handicapped people who work in the building. Also, if you reconfigure the space as far as the secured parking that the judges now use, that's their jurisdiction. I seriously doubt whether judges are willing to give up their secured parking closer to the building. So as a result, you're stuck looking for a parking space like any other citizen, and as you know if you have been over there, that walk is about 200 yards in to the door. So parking and access to the building is going to be a problem.

LEG. STERN:

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Thank you, George. Appreciate it.

MR. ROACH:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Next up we have Dan Farrell from AME.

MR. FARRELL:

Good morning. My name is Dan Farrell. I'm a Treasurer at AME. I'm going to keep this short and simple. At DPW -- I come from DPW Sanitation myself personally, and I'm here to advocate on behalf of DPW to fill vacancies. It's just like every other department, you know, we're very short-staffed. We need the help.

The other issue was the contracting out and the consulting out. We need these people to support the more experienced, qualified people and to help them do the work and take pride in doing that work, and they do it very well, but we just need more bodies. I implore you to get more positions out there for us so we can do the work ourselves and do it right. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Thank you. Does anybody have any questions? All right. Thank you very much. All right. I don't have any more cards. Is there anybody else in the audience that wishes to address us? Seeing none, I guess Gil, if you want to come up. I have two preliminary questions, and then I'm sure there will be more. I can see that you have everybody that would need to answer pretty much any of our questions here, so I thank you for that. I guess given the state of the budget my question -- well, my first question would be is there anything we can cut that -- is there anything new we can cut that is not going to cause pain?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

I mean, we do have certain concerns, you know, with some of the things that are recommended. I would first commend the BRO on their effort and the document that they put together. It's a very concise and thorough review of the Operating Budget. Certainly we have concerns with regard to the reduction in snow removal. There is no way of knowing, obviously, what's going to happen over the winter. Similarly, postage is a little bit of a concern because of the new requirements that have been mandated by the feds on postage and sizing and everything else. For the most part, you know, obviously there is the argument that can be made that if we need the money it will get put back in one way or the other and we can deal with it, so.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

All right. Well, then the second question would be is there any new revenue that we don't know about? And it would be really great if you could say yes.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

I wish I could say yes, but I can't.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Okay. For specifics, do we have any questions from -- John, do you have anything?

LEG. KENNEDY:

Just a couple, Brian.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

All right. Well, fire away.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Gil, first, we're going through the budget, I mean, it's no secret. Everybody knows, you know, the different things that we're looking at. Last year we went through a fairly intensive back and forth about vehicles. I know your office provided me with information, I got information from the Sheriff's Office, from all over the place. I see we have a fairly sizeable request in again this year. It's upwards of eight million. And I know that I was reading again last night -- I forget how many vehicles all together. It's got to be 150, 160 vehicles, I guess, that we're looking at.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

And I think a majority of them are Public Safety, correct?

LEG. KENNEDY:

Well, we have 139 PD and we have 56 Sheriff. Now, my question goes to -- we talked last year about the fact there was a change in decom where we moved from what had been a previous policy, I guess, of decommission at 100,000, and that moved up to, what 110?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

A hundred and ten.

LEG. KENNEDY:

A hundred and ten. How has that process worked its way out so far, and can we reasonably pare it back? I mean, absent any of these other departments driving something that literally is on three wheels, my opinion is I don't see them getting a car. But, you know, I know Public Safety, we've got to have personnel in vehicles that operate.

MR. CALDERONE:

Okay. The 110,000 miles is just a benchmark. Our policy now is we look at the vehicle. It might get decommissioned at 90,000 depending on, you know, what kind of shape it is safety wise, how much it's going to cost to put it back into the fleet. But at 110,000 if there's nothing wrong with it, we keep it on the road. So 110,000 is just an average. But, yes, we're keeping them on the road longer.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. Can we meet our needs with Public Safety with less than -- about 200 vehicles, almost 200 vehicles?

MR. CALDERONE:

Yes. Because -- because with extending the -- okay. There were two things that went on. We're extending the mileage, so that's one thing. And by coincidence, by accident, we had ordered -- over ordered cars last year. So with that in mind, and we've got some that we still have that we have not

commissioned yet that are brand new, so between that and the extended mileage, yes, we can get away with the 200 less cars.

LEG. KENNEDY:

And approximately how much is a vehicle, 21, 22 grand?

MR. CALDERONE:

Correct.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Okay. So we could probably back into a number from that.

MR. CALDERONE:

Correct.

LEG. KENNEDY:

All right. The other area that I wanted to go to, and this might be something that, you know, I don't know whether it's Ben or whomever. We've had this ongoing conversation for a couple of years now with costing out for takeover with private sanitary systems as they come into the County and looking at what the per annum charge is going to be for residents. We've gone through that whole component of, you know, what share the local districts would bear. But I read the BRO narrative and I see that, you know, in the area of sanitary just like all your other areas, you are down in staff and your vacancies are up tremendously. Yes? No?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

Yes, we are down in staff. There is vacancies as in every other division. We recognize that. That really doesn't have anything to do with the actual charges that were developed. The actual charges were developed based on actual man hours and at plants of similar size.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Yeah, but there was a component in there, Gil, that if you remember it was called non-direct cost or soft cost. We priced out an actual for an operator, we priced out an actual for a helper, and then we had non-direct, a soft cost, that was actually almost a time and a half higher. Again, I'll go to Galleria where we had about a 500 grand per annum charge. We only had 200,000, 210,000 for an operator and for a helper. We had about 300 grand in non-direct cost. The notion there was well, this is a 3%, a 4% component of whatever that was, 13, 14 million that you have in the sanitary charge. Twenty percent of your positions are vacant. That salary is never getting paid. It's going into this concept of turnover savings, but as far as individual residents paying for people that never make it on a payroll, it goes to what I was saying in the first instance. It's an inflated set of charges.

My point is we have to come back to try and look at a different way to charge residents for services they are purportedly getting that don't get put out there. That's all. All right. That's the only two areas that I need to go into.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Legislator Horsley.

LEG. HORSLEY:

Good morning, Gil. Just a quick one. We were just -- Legislator Beedenbender and myself were just discussing the issue about snow removal. We see that it's been cut substantially from last year. It looks like upwards of a million dollars of cutbacks. Are you expecting a warm winter? Is this global warming? What's the thinking behind this cutback?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

The recommendation from BRO or our own reduction?

LEG. HORSLEY:

It looks like your reduction. Is that true?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

No, this was -- we argued last year about reducing last year's, you know, the 2008 budget and now --

LEG. HORSLEY:

Oh, you wanted to reduce it last year and now you finally go your cut?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

No, we didn't want to reduce it last year. We argued against it last year and now it is being further cut. We were concerned because of the winter.

LEG. HORSLEY:

It is being further cut. So how are you going to make it on such a bare bones budget?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

That's why I raised it earlier. We do have concerns with this budget. And I'm, you know, certainly not going to get my back up over it, but, you know, if we get hit with a hard winter, we could certainly be coming back and asking for more money. That's why we argued --

LEG. HORSLEY:

Your option is -- it's like a roulette, a Russian roulette type of thing. In other words, if we have a warm winter we're good, if we have a bad winter, well, we come back.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

Yes. Right.

LEG. HORSLEY:

You anticipate having a good winter. So what do we do then, what do you anticipate we should be doing as a Legislature if we have a cold winter?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

I'd certainly like to see the snow removal budget, you know, raised back as was recommended at least so that, you know, we have that money in there without reducing it. I think it was --

LEG. HORSLEY:

Was it 2.4 million, something like that?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

Yeah. Actually, they recommend -- I apologize. They decreased 2008 and they increased -- they increased for snow and ice removal supplies by 100,000, but they decreased our budget in 2008 for rental. I mean, there is a possibility that, you know, we could get snow and it could impact us.

LEG. HORSLEY:

It can happen.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

Oh, yeah. And usually it does when you don't want it to.

LEG. HORSLEY:

Okay. So in other words, you would rather see this, the budget increase on snow removal to the point where you recommended.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

Yes.

LEG. HORSLEY:

Got it.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

All right. I have a couple of questions on a couple of different issues. I guess the first -- I want to talk about the highway and bridge maintenance. I know we had had this discussion at the Legislative meeting. We don't have to get into the status of all the bridges. I mean, if you want to make a statement you are more than welcome to do so. But I guess my question would be in terms of staffing in that particular division or administration. I think the BRO report said there is 43 people to do the highway maintenance and the bridges and all that. I guess there is some prioritization that occurs there of the work. I would imagine litter falls well behind making a bridge stand up?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

Yes.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

So, could you just talk about the status of that particular division?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

We are in the process of discussions with the Executive's Office on bringing staff in as we need and, you know, there's no question that we need. Part of the problem that we're having is qualified people. When we just went out to hire for a structural engineer to replace Tom Rogers, the Director who retired, and it was a difficult process. Both the public and the private side are having trouble filling those vacancies. We brought a young fellow in, you know, who just started very recently, and, you know, we will be going back to request, you know, some more. But we do prioritize it.

The bridge issue, the issue with, you know, going back for a CN, we are in discussions with the State and we're setting up a meeting with their bridge inspection staff. They were very concerned when we pointed out the issues, you know, with the bridges. We're still looking to them to, you know, basically run the lead of reviewing whichever crew did that -- those inspections that, you know, we have problems with. We are looking to resolve them, you know, as quickly as we can.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

With what you just said, Gil, maybe I either didn't hear this on Tuesday or don't remember it. There was a problem with a State inspection crew? They went and they, I guess, are you saying that some crew --

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

Well, the State basically does a biannual inspection of every bridge throughout the County. So two years ago these bridges appeared to be fine. This next go around that they went through, you know, that's when they discovered there was a certain error in, you know, in these two reports that --

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

They're saying the level of deterioration in those two years was beyond -- so somebody had to miss somebody the first time.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

Right.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Okay. All right. Well, that doesn't -- I guess it makes me feel a little bit better, but I guess not really.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

We are, you know, we are really on top of this. This is a very big concern of ours. We're not looking at anything devastating, but, you know, we want to make sure that we know where everything is and that there aren't any other issues similar to this out there, so.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Thank you. The last question, I just had some questions about the buses, and I see Mr. Shinnick in the back there, if you could come up for a sec, please.

One thing that BRO, and I'll just talk while you are walking up here. BRO had mentioned in the budget, in their report, that I know we got the automatic vehicle locator system. Now, that's not the same thing as the announcements that are being put in the bus and the boards that are being put in the buses so people can hear what the stop is and see what it is on the board, right?

MR. SHINNICK:

It's part of the same overall project. We advanced the enunciation system for immediate compliance with the ADA requirements. But the tracking of the vehicles involves a lot of data collection, a lot of information to us, over the airways and the enunciation system is part of that.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Okay. And the reason I ask is because in BRO's report they said that -- I guess your requested budget said you'd require two technical staff for the operation and maintenance of the system. Now, in my mind it would be less -- as long as we have the enunciation system and the display system and those things, those are the most important. I guess my question is without those staff will those two things still go ahead and we'll just have the vehicle locator system that we're trying to deal with or is there a plan for that without the staff.

MR. SHINNICK:

We can maintain the enunciation system without additional staff. In fact, what we've just done is gone to bid on roughly a third of the system. The other two-thirds are already up and running. So, you know, we've been using that system and maintaining it. The AVL system itself will require a couple of technical people to support that operation.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Okay. And there are cameras? That's also part of the bid now or?

MR. SHINNICK:

These are separate items. We have hybrid buses that will be delivered very shortly that have cameras on them as well as an order of paratransit vehicles that will be equipped with cameras on board. But that's a separate entity.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Okay. But that's funded and we're all right with all that.

MR. SHINNICK:

That's correct.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Okay. My last question would just be about the ridership. In BRO's report they indicate that it grew by 25% between 2006 and 2007, and about 19% between 2007 and 2008 I guess to date. I'm assuming the funding is adequate to handle the buses should we I guess see another 15 to 20% increase? I mean, the funding should be relatively --

MR. SHINNICK:

You're talking about the paratransit system in terms of those statistics.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

I'm sorry, yes. The paratransit. I'm sorry.

MR. SHINNICK:

Our funding request indicates a growth in the system for next year. We are at capacity right now. When the delivery of vehicles comes in the next few weeks, literally we are going to get some new vehicles early in November, we'll be able to expand the system by a handful of vehicles and pick up some of the capacity. But we are at capacity now.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

So when you get more there is going to be a net add? Even if you have to take some out there will be a net add when you get more?

MR. SHINNICK:

Absolutely. We're getting 31 vehicles and approximately 20 vehicles will be retired, and roughly ten will be new service.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Okay. I don't really have any other questions. Does anybody else have any other questions?
Legislator Stern.

LEG. STERN:

Very quickly while we have Mr. Shinnick. Good morning. Maybe you could just let us know the status of the study.

MR. SHINNICK:

Well, it is coming along. We're about to see the fruits of the study in the very near future. We've just completed an exercise, a series of workshops with the bus riders themselves, asking what their opinions are of the system, what they would like to see. We held those workshops in Riverhead and Hauppauge. When I say we, the consulting agency. The consultants also had met with all of the bus drivers in the system to get their input. This is all done on top of the analysis that they have been working on all along.

What they are doing now is to take all that information they have been collecting and reducing it into a series of recommendations. We have brought policy issues that they've already passed down to us and that's been transmitted to our committees, but now they are talking about route specific level changes, additional services. They are talking about what the Sunday service would look like, that sort of thing. We don't have that yet, but it will be here in the next several weeks. We'll have to look over those materials, get back to the consultants. But we are about to have the preliminary recommendations coming into the County as to what the plan will look like.

LEG. STERN:

Very good. And, Gil, before you go, I just had a question about litter, litter removal. What -- who has jurisdiction over the service roads of the Expressway and who has responsibility for litter removal along those roads and in what stretches?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

It generally depends on whether -- it's split between the State and us, the County. Depending on what section of the service road you are speaking about, that if we had jurisdiction over that section we would have jurisdiction over litter removal on that as well. I don't know off the top of my head what --

LEG. STERN:

Is it a joint jurisdiction or is there one section where it is just Suffolk County and another section where it is just New York State?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

It is really what it is. There is no joint, you know, it is either one or the other.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

It's a hodgepodge, isn't it?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

Yeah, yeah.

LEG. STERN:

And at DPW do we have personnel that are dedicated just towards litter removal or do they have other duties as well and then they perform litter removal along with the way.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

We do litter removal, you know, really it's -- how do I put this. It's not our top priority. If everything's in order and we can get to it, we get to it. If it becomes an issue where it is, you know, substantial, we will address it and send a crew out there. But there isn't a crew specific for litter removal.

LEG. STERN:

Okay. Thanks.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Legislator Kennedy.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Yeah, just follow-up on that, Gil. With the service roads, if the responsibility for cleaning differs between us and the State, what about snow removal, you know, surface maintenance, the whole nine. We flip back and forth? So as you go along that service road we stop and we start?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

There are like, for example --

LEG. KENNEDY:

Who plows the snow?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

We do in some cases, the State does. It depends on whether we have jurisdiction over that service road or they have it. They basically designate which ones we are responsible for and they say you are doing this, and we basically maintain it. It's part of the -- unfortunately, the Commissioner of DOT has the ability to say this section, you guys are doing it. And it's generally an established list. We can get that if you want. I don't know which ones they are off the top of my head, though.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

But, Legislator Kennedy, just from past experience, and my past job, I will tell you that it is a hodgepodge and you really can't make sense of it. There will be two miles that the County does and then three miles that the State does and then a mile that the County does.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Well, from my past job I can tell you actually the takings maps are all out there in the Clerk's Office, and that's really what it goes down to, how the acquisition was done. But when you are talking about implementing services, that's lunacy that, you know, a State plow stops at, you know, what 60 and a County plow picks up to go to 62? That's insane.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

The routes are basically worked out between us and DOT. It's not as complex. I mean, you know, there's probably bigger questions on when you have, you know, something sitting out there. But for the most part you try and work it out so that your plow maximizes, you know, the amount of time it is going to spend plowing.

LEG. STERN:

You can see it. It's just so indicative of the problem that we face with all the different levels of government. You can see where DPW was called and they are responsive and they do a great job, and then you can go a couple of blocks away and then you see it is under a State jurisdiction and it's a mess. But the general public doesn't realize why it is that way, but we know that, yeah, when you call DPW and they are out and they do a great job, but just down the road, you know, you don't have access to that same level of service. It's unfortunate.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

Thank you. And we do get the calls. If it is our jurisdiction we do respond, you know, immediately.

CHAIRMAN BEEDENBENDER:

Do you have anything else? All right. If there are no other questions I'm just going to repeat something that I said to you on Tuesday, Gil, that I wanted to thank everybody from your department, since most of them are here, for the work that they did on -- well, Portion Road, number one, because that's finally going forward. I'm sure the highway guys sitting over there will breathe a sigh of relief once the construction starts and once it's finished they might retire. So I just wanted to thank them for that because this is, I don't know, eight, nine years in the works. You had a little less gray hair before then, Bill.

And also for all the work that's been going on in my district. And perhaps I'm just a fortunately showed up, well, the economic situation perhaps I shouldn't have showed up now, but every road in my district is getting worked on and I've got nothing but rave reviews from my constituents. They are happy with Nicolls Road. They like to drive fast, which is probably a problem, but there is no more light. So I just wanted to thank you for that and it's been a great help to the people in my district to get around. I just want to thank you and all your staff for that. If we don't have anything else, we will be adjourned.

(THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:13 A.M.)